



JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR · JERRY COSTELLO II, DIRECTOR

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## **PRITZKER ADMINISTRATION SECURES \$14.4 MILLION TO PROVIDE NEW MARKETS FOR UNDERSERVED FARMERS**

*Locally sourced produce, proteins and processed foods will be distributed to communities in need*

**SPRINGFIELD, IL-** The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) and Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) worked jointly to secure United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funding that provides new opportunities for underserved farmers and communities. The Local Food Purchasing Cooperative Agreement (LFPA) will allow the State of Illinois to purchase produce, proteins and fresh processed foods directly from underserved farmers at fair market value. Food will then be distributed to communities in need, including schools, non-profits and the food bank system.

State-wide partners will convene in year one of the program to develop an implementation plan, taking into consideration the needs of underserved farmers and communities not traditionally served through food distribution networks. This planning process will also examine how culturally appropriate fresh foods can be made more accessible to food insecure communities.

Year two of the program will begin with a Notice of Funding Opportunity for the issuance of subawards for management of multiple state-wide aggregate sites. These sites will serve as collection centers for products from underserved farmers. Each awarded aggregation site will be responsible for engaging with underserved farmers, purchasing food, tracking metrics, packaging product, transporting product and ensuring equitable distribution of these products to underserved communities throughout Illinois.

“I’m grateful to the USDA for their partnership with IDHS and IDOA in creating a creative, coordinated program like the Local Food Purchasing Cooperative Agreement,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “This program will support local farmers and those struggling with food insecurity, creating a system where Illinoisans in the public and private sectors can work with the federal government to help each other and benefit from our abundant natural resources.”

“Being hungry is a reality for far too many people in this country and in our state. That is why Illinois is using creative resourcing and dedicated collaboration with stakeholders to fight food insecurity,” **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. “The Local Food Purchasing Cooperative Agreement will provide fresh, nutrient-dense food to those in need—and in the process uplift many who feed and grow Illinois. By buying from underserved farmers, this agreement supports a community of growers who have been neglected for far too long. We know that Ag connects us all best when we work together to end hunger.”

“This cooperative agreement is an opportunity to unite Illinoisans invested in building a resilient food system and develop a collaborative network of food system support.,” **said IDOA Director Jerry Costello**.

“We envision an Illinois where no one is without food — where all children have access to nutritious, appealing meals at school and at home, and where families in every rural and urban community have access to quality, affordable food. We envision an Illinois where people do not have to choose between paying a medical bill or putting food on the table, and where limited mobility doesn’t prevent older adults or people with disabilities from having a nutritious meal. We envision an Illinois where the color of your skin, your citizenship status, or the zip code where you live do not make you more or less likely to be food insecure,” **said Grace B. Hou, Secretary, Illinois Department of Human Services**.

“Promoting economic equity in food access and agriculture has been among my top priorities as a legislator,” **said State Representative Sonya Harper**. That’s why I’ve passed both the law creating the Agriculture Equity Commission to study policy issues affecting minority farmers and the effects of food system issues on vulnerable communities, as well as the resolution establishing the Good Food Purchasing Policy Task Force to better ensure that healthy foods are sustainably, locally, and equitably sourced. Millions in federal funding for the purchase of healthy foods from underserved farmers is a fantastic development, and I applaud ISDA, USDA and the Governor for making this happen.”

For more information on the Local Food Purchase Agreement, please email [agr.lfpa@illinois.gov](mailto:agr.lfpa@illinois.gov).

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